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NOTES ON MISKUTO GRAMMAR AND ON OTHER INDIAN LANGUAGES OF EASTERN NICARAGUA

By G. R. HEATH

I. THE ORIGIN OF THE MISKUTO TRIBE

THE eastern half of Nicaragua contains three main tribes of native Indians: the Miskuto, the Sumu, and the Rama.

The Sumu must at one time have been very numerous and important, tradition telling of great "kings" who ruled over them; but in any case they certainly occupied an immense tract of country. A Sumu tribe has been discovered by Dr Walter Lehmann, of the Royal Ethnographical Museum in Munich, in the eastern part of Salvador; and another, the remnant of the ancient Yusku Sumu, near Matagalpa, Nicaragua. The Twahka Sumu are now found on the Rio Butuk (Patuca) in Honduras, and on the Waspuk, Wawa, Kukallaya, Banbana, and Prinsapolka rivers in Nicaragua; the kindred Panamaka on the Bocay, and the Ohlwa (Wulwa) on the Rio Grande and the Escondido with their tributaries. The Ulua river in western Honduras seems to be named from the tribe last mentioned; and the now extinct tribes of Kukra and Prinsu appear to have been members of the great Sumu family. The dialects of these tribes are so similar as to be almost mutually intelligible. A Sumu tradition, as told by a Twahka man from the Prinsapolka, represents all the tribes as having sprung from a pair of semi-divine ancestors, Maisahana ("He who begot us") and Itwana ("Our Mother"), who lived at Kounapa, a mountain situated between the Butuk and Wangki rivers. The first-born tribe was that of the Miskuto. Disobedient and headstrong, then as now, the Miskuto ran away to the seacoast. The next born, the Twahka, consider themselves to this day to be the nobility among the Sumu; while the youngest, the Ohlwa, being according to Indian custom the favorites, were taught the secrets of medicine and incantation by the "Mother". Now the greater part of the

Miskuto vocabulary shows very close connection indeed with the Sumu dialects; and the grammar, although much simpler, certainly presents some similarity. Yet anthropologists, on grounds that are not very apparent, invariably group the Sumu among the Lenca peoples and the Miskuto among the Carib. Columbus, who discovered the country in 1502, seems to have known the Miskuto under the name of Caribisi. The discovery, by Dr Lehmann, of a tribe of Rama living on the Kurubisi river in Costa Rica, and the fact that the Rama of Nicaragua have always claimed connection with Costa Rica, seem somewhat to invalidate this apparent testimony to the connection of the Miskuto with the Carib. Neither does the language show any connection. A legend which has been given out as authentic by Señor Eduardo Pereira, a descendant of the late Miskuto ruling family, claims that the Miskuto originally lived in the country around Rivas, on the Great Lake, and were called Kiribi. After many years' fighting with Indian invaders from the north (apparently Nahuatl), they were driven around the lake and eastward, until they came to the sea. Under their great chief Wakna, and his son Lakya the Great (Lakya means "Evening Star"), they subjugated the Sumu tribes who at that time inhabited the coast. Believing that they had now found a safe home, they gave themselves the name of *Dis Kitwras Nani*,¹ "they who cannot be dislodged," which was corrupted into Miskuto, Miskito, Mosquito, and even Mosco. The present writer has no means of telling whether this story is a genuine tradition of the ruling family or not. The suggested connection between the names Kiribi, Caribisi, and Kurubisi is probably merely fortuitous; for there is nothing whatever in the Rama language to suggest any vital connection with the Miskuto, although the two languages very possibly influenced one another, the Rama of Nicaragua having been for many years the slaves of the Miskuto, who brought many of them up from the south to the neighborhood of Bluefields and treated them with great cruelty.

¹ The word *dis* does not occur in present-day Miskuto, except as an apparent corruption of the English adverb "just". It is barely possible, however, that some ancient word has been confused with the corrupted adverb.

One thing, however, is clear: that the Indian traditions do not point to a Carib origin of the Miskuto people and language.

On the other hand, the physique and the habits and character of the Miskuto differ considerably from those of the Sumu or Rama. The staple food of the Miskuto is the sweet cassava, or yuca; while the Sumu seem to live almost exclusively on bananas, and the Nahuatl of the interior are maize-eaters. The Rama nowadays eat both cassava and bananas. Now the Carib are the greatest cassava-eating people in this part of the world. Again, the Sumu rarely intermarry with strangers of another race, and are fast diminishing in numbers, while the Miskuto assimilate all races. The children always speak the language of the mother, and grow up as Miskuto Indians, whether the father be English, Swedish, German, "Creole," Carib, Spaniard, Sumu, Rama, or Chinaman. The villages between Wounta and the Hawson river (Sanawala) show this phenomenon to perfection. If the tradition be genuine that long before Columbus a tribe of cannibal invaders spent some time on this coast, one can see the possibility of an original Sumu tribe having been modified by an influx of Carib blood. Moreover, it is well known that when the Carib went on their expeditions of conquest, they killed only the males among their enemies, and took the females to be their wives. So, when the Spaniards first came to some of the Lesser Antilles, they found that the men had one language and the women another; and this special language of the women appears to have been Arawak. The so-called Carib of the neighborhood of Trujillo, Honduras, who call themselves Garif, were brought there, or rather to the adjacent island of Roatan, by the British Government at the close of the eighteenth century, as they had caused so much trouble in their former island homes of Dominica and St Vincent. Their language has incorporated a number of French words, just as the Miskuto has incorporated a considerable number of English names for articles which the tribe did not originally possess. But some of the most obviously original parts of the language, such as the first three numerals, are pure Arawak. Hence Professor Finck, in his *Die Sprachstämme des Erdkreises*, classes both Miskuto and Garif as "isolated languages."

The Garif language appears to have been investigated but slightly. The Gospels of St Mark and St John represent the only attempt to reduce it to writing that the present writer has been able to discover; and the translator of these has not published a grammar. The small settlements of these "Carib" on Pearl lagoon in Nicaragua are of very recent date, and can be left entirely out of account in estimating the relationship or otherwise between the Carib and Miskuto peoples and tongues.

Another influence, however, has been brought to bear on the Miskuto people which has differentiated them very strongly from the other Indians. In the days of the buccaneers a slave-ship coming from Africa (Dutch according to some; Spanish and bound for Cuba according to others) was wrecked a little south of Cape Gracias. The Africans, after considerable fighting, became assimilated with the original Indians; and the resultant "Sambos," a people of strong physique, numerous progeny, and considerable arrogance, and who speak Miskuto with certain curious dialectic variations, have had great influence in the country. Through the importation of slaves by former British settlers (who afterward removed to Belize), and through more recent immigration of negroes of more or less pure African blood, chiefly from Jamaica, the Miskuto people have come to present Sambo characteristics in nearly all their villages. May it not be that the much-discussed name "Miskuto" has originated in the phrase "Indios Mixtos," used perhaps at first of the Sambos?¹ For the pure Indians often call themselves "Tāwira" ("heavy-haired"); and at least one part of the tribe seems formerly to have had the name "Waika," which simply means "men". In any case, one can scarcely deny the African influence on the language. The vowel scale is exactly the same as in the Jamaican Creole dialect. Several of the peculiar phrases of everyday life are found literally translated into English in Jamaica. The style of thought, while resembling Sumu, also resembles closely the Takitaki, or "Negro-English" of Surinam, the only Creole dialect which has become, for the time being, a real literary language. The Creole-Dutch of St Thomas has died out;

¹ This suggestion is as yet scarcely more than a conjecture.

books printed in it are very rare;¹ while French Creole is represented only by a translation of the Gospel of St Mark. The anancy stories of Jamaica bear such a resemblance to the stories of kyaki and limi (agouti and jaguar) of the Miskuto that one can scarcely doubt a common origin; and these stories are certainly African. Westermann has shown conclusively that in Takitaki a corrupted English vocabulary has been fixed into purely African grammatical, and especially syntactical, forms.

In studying the Miskuto language, therefore, due consideration must be given not only to that large element which is obviously related to Sumu, but also to the possibility of influences on the part of Rama, Carib, or Arawak, and some West African language or languages. It would be well if some philologist could make a special comparative study of Miskuto, Sumu, Garif, Arawak, Guiana Carib, the West Indian Creole dialects, and the tongues of the Guinea coast. The African part of the investigation would, however, prove disproportionately wide. For it is not known from what part those slaves came who helped to form the Nicaraguan Sambos; and even in Jamaica at the present time there is still a considerable difference between the Congo, Ibo, and Mandingo types, both in features and in the build of the body, although the linguistic differences are perhaps no longer traceable.

2. NOTATION AND PHONOLOGY

To represent the sounds of the Indian languages under consideration, the Roman alphabet will be used in these notes, with the following special features:

The vowels *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u* correspond almost exactly to the sound of these letters in German.

The letters *g*, *j*, *s*, *w*, *y* represent the sounds heard in the English words get, jet, set, wet, yet; and the combination *ch* stands for the sound heard in the word chest. *C* by itself will not be used. The other letters have the same power as in English, except that the aspirate *h* is always to be pronounced, even at the end of a syllable

¹ Note: Compare, however, the recent researches of Dr Hesseling of Leiden.—J. DYNELEY PRINCE.

(e. g. in the tribal name Ohlwa the *h* must be distinctly heard as an aspirate; but must not, on the other hand, be pronounced as strongly as either the palatal or the guttural German *ch*).

Long vowels will be distinguished by the grave accent (·).

The stress accent in Miskuto is almost invariably on the first syllable. Any variations from this rule will be marked by the acute accent, as in Spanish (').

When the grave and acute accents occur on the same vowel, they combine to form the circumflex (^).

Nasalized vowels are sometimes met with: they resemble the ordinary vowels followed by a sound corresponding to the French *n* in *mon*. But as this nasal sound seems to be pronounced not after, but simultaneously with, the vowels, it seems better to mark the vowels with the tilde (~), to indicate that the vowels themselves are nasalized. Such nasalized vowels are always long, thus: ã, ē, ī, ð, û.

The combination *ng* is, of course, a single sound: the double sound in the English word "longer" will be represented by *ngg*.

It is believed that this system of notation will suffice to denote phonetically and consistently every word that will be met with in these languages of eastern Nicaragua. The orthography in the printed Miskuto grammars, Biblical translations, hymn-books, and so forth, has been the subject of much controversy, and can scarcely be regarded as settled yet. It is to be hoped that when it is finally settled it will be consistent and scientific, both in the interests of philology and also in the still more important interests of the scholars in the reading-classes of the mission stations.

The form *Miskuto*, for the name of the language and of the tribe, has been used in preference to the more common form *Miskito*, as the observations of the writer in many villages and for a number of years have shown that those Indians who speak most carefully and grammatically invariably use the short *u* for the middle vowel, making it, however, so short and unaccentuated that the difference between the two forms is not very marked. The Sumu call the Miskuto "Weiya"; the Rama call them "Pakba".

Consonants.—In Miskuto, Sumu, and Rama alike the spirants

f and *v* are entirely lacking. In words which have been adopted from foreign languages, *f* is changed into *p*, and *v* into *b*. Thus *bip* (ox or cow), from "beef"; *heben*, from "heaven". The English sounds written *th*, both the hard and the soft, are likewise absent, being transliterated in adopted words into *t* and *d* respectively. Ordinarily, the spirants *ch*, *j*, and *sh* are also absent; but now and then one hears *j* for a strongly pronounced *y* (as in some forms of Spanish), and *sh* for *s*: these occasional deviations seem to arise from individual idiosyncrasy. Where there has not been much contact with foreigners, *j* at the beginning of a foreign word is changed to *y*, as in *Yosep*, from "Joseph". Otherwise *ch*, *j*, and *sh* alike tend to change to *s* or *ts*, sometimes with alteration of the preceding consonant, as in *Sabat*, from "Schubert"; *séngs*, from "change" (used of money); *Yats*, for "George". Really careful speakers sometimes substitute *sy* for *sh*, and *dy* for *j*; others, less careful, substitute *d* only for *j*, as in *Dirusa*, for "Jerusha". The combinations *sp* and *st* are not permissible at the beginning of words: the *s* is simply dropped.¹

Originally *b* and *p* could not stand at the end of a word, and there was no *g* at all. (The single sound represented by the double character *ng* was always present.) But many words which originally had *k* now have *g*, as *gunggung*, sometimes still called *kungkung* (the howling monkey); and foreign influence has modified the strictness of other phonetic rules.

Z (or the soft *s*) does not occur at all.

Q will not be used in these notes: the deep, hard, guttural corresponding to *k* which might be represented by *q*, and which occurs in Eskimo, is practically never found in these languages of eastern Nicaragua. The common combination *qu* is more correctly written *kw*. It should always be remembered that in combinations such as "ky," *y* is a consonant.

Mouth Position.—The fundamental position of the mouth in speaking Miskuto is approximately that of the long vowel *ä*, with a tendency toward the nasalized *ä*. As in all other languages, this fundamental mouth-position should be carefully noted, as it is a key to a genuine native pronunciation.

¹ Only at the ends of words can the *s* of these combinations be pronounced.

In Sumu the fundamental position seems to be that of the short *e*; and in Rama to be somewhere between short *a* and long *ə*.

Vowels.—Whereas in Sumu and Rama the five vowels, *a, e, i, o, u*, are all well represented, in Miskuto *e* and *o* scarcely exist at all; and it would seem that originally only the three fundamental vowels, *a, i*, and *u*, were present in the language (compare Arabic). The long *ɛ*, where, as in English, it has any after-sound of *y*, invariably is sounded as long *ɪ*: in the very few native words in which it occurs, it is sounded very broad, like the German *ae* (ä). So, too, even in an apparently true native word like *dòri* (a keeled canoe), the *o* is very often pronounced as *u* ("dùri"). The short *o*, where it occurs in Sumu and Rama, is equivalent to the English *o* in "obey".

In foreign words the English short *o* in "not," and also, as a rule, the English short *u* in "but," are changed to the Miskuto short *a*. The English *au* in "Paul" goes into long *ə*. The English *oi* goes into *ui*. The combination *iu* found in Miskuto books is not genuine: it should always be either *yù* or *iw*, the *y* or *w* respectively being consonantal. So, too, the so-called "very short, unaccentuated *u*" before *l* or *r* at the beginning of words is really the consonant *w*, used exactly as in Anglo-Saxon (thus, *wli*, green turtle, is one syllable; *wrikha*, fever, is only two).

Tone and Accent.—The stress-accent in Miskuto is very nearly invariably on the first syllable: the word *umpira*, "pitiable," is the most common exception. In Sumu and Rama, however, there is very little stress-accent at all, the syllables being almost equally emphasized. In Miskuto the ordinarily accentuated syllable is about a musical third or fourth higher in pitch than the other syllables; but the Miskuto people try to make up for the poverty of their language in abstract expressions by varying the tone very greatly. When very special emphasis is called for, the accentuated syllable is often pitched a whole octave higher. When a whole word is specially emphasized, the accentuated syllable is first pitched about an octave higher, then slightly dropped about a fourth, then the second syllable follows on the octave. Sometimes when an adjective follows a noun, but the noun is very emphatic, the first

syllable is pitched on the high octave, and all the rest of both words follow on the low octave without any special accentuation. Sometimes for emphasis the vowel accentuated is lengthened and drawled, the voice first rising to about a ninth above the ordinary, and then descending two or three semitones in a drawl. Thus:

waíknă târă 'a tall man.' Simple statement; voice raised a little on each accented syllable.

waíknătâră 'a great strong man.' Emphasis on the word *waikna*, 'man'; voice raised about an octave; other syllables short.

waíknă târă 'an unusually tall man.' The *a* lengthened; voice raised about a ninth, and then drawled down.

waíknă tâ-ră 'a surprisingly tall man.' For the first *a* in *târa* (great, tall) voice raised about an octave, then slightly dropped, then raised again for the second *a*.

(The musical intervals given are, of course, quite inexact; but are as approximate as possible.)

Miskuto Inflections.—Miskuto words are not inflected for gender, number, or case, except that the first and second personal pronouns have separate forms for the nominative and the objective:

yang, I; *ai*, me; *man*, thou; *mai*, thee.

The word *nani*, placed after its noun or adjective, is the sign of the plural: verbs do not need any such sign.

To express possession, the noun has, besides its absolute form, a construct state, and a first, second, and third personal. The third personal state is formed from the construct by the prefix *ai*; the other states by inflections which are either suffixed or inserted.

Absolute:	<i>yul</i> (dog),	<i>lùpa</i> (offspring),	<i>mùla</i> (grandchild).
Construct:	<i>yùla</i> (dog of),	<i>lùpya</i> (child of),	<i>mùla</i> (grandchild of).
1st pers.:	<i>yùli</i> (my dog),	<i>lùpi</i> (my child),	<i>mùli</i> (my grandchild).
2d pers.:	<i>yùlam</i> (your dog),	<i>lùpyam</i> (your child),	<i>mùlam</i> (your grandchild).
3d pers.:	<i>aiyula</i> (his dog),	<i>ailùpya</i> (his child),	<i>aimùla</i> (his grandchild).

Absolute:	<i>nàkra</i> (eye),	<i>aisa</i> (father).
Construct:	<i>nàkra</i> (eye of),	<i>aisika</i> (father of).
1st pers.:	<i>naikra</i> (my eye),	<i>aisiki</i> (my father).
2d pers.:	<i>namkra</i> (your eye),	<i>aisikam</i> (your father).
3d pers.:	<i>ainàkra</i> (his eye),	<i>aiaisika</i> (his father).

Euphony is the chief consideration in deciding how a noun is to be inflected. Some may be inflected in either of two ways; some are mixed.

THE VERB presents very few variations from the regular type. The most typical example is here given.

Smalkaia (to teach). Present participle, *smalki*.

Transgressive participle (compare Slavonic languages), *smalkisi*.

Past participle, *smalkan*.

	Present Indefinite	Present Absolute	Past Indefinite
1st pers.	<i>smalkisni</i>	<i>smalkuni</i>	<i>smalkri</i>
2d pers.	<i>smalkisma</i>	<i>smalkuma</i>	<i>smalkram</i>
3d pers.	<i>smalkisa</i>	<i>smalkuya</i>	<i>smalkan</i>
	Past Absolute	Future	Conditional
1st pers.	<i>smalkaini</i>	<i>smalkamni</i>	<i>smalkaina</i>
2d pers.	<i>smalkatma</i>	<i>smalkma</i>	<i>smalkaima</i>
3d pers.	<i>smalkata</i>	<i>smalkbia</i>	<i>smalkaiya</i>
			Connectional
1st pers.			<i>smalkrika</i>
2d pers.			<i>smalkrika</i>
3d pers.			<i>smalka (lk-ka)</i>

Imperative: 2d person, *smalks*, *smalkram*, *smalka*; also *smalksi*.

1st person plural, *smalkpi*.

Compound tenses are expressed by a circumlocution.

There is no special inflection for the passive, strictly speaking; the active third person is used impersonally with the objective of the pronoun: Thus, from *ikaia*, to kill:

ai ikisa—one is (they are) killing me: I am being killed.

ai ikata—one (they) killed me: I was killed, or, I had been killed.

ai ikan sa (*sa* = "it is"), it is that they killed me: I am killed (in the sense of "I am dead").

Verbal nouns:

smalkra, teaching in the abstract, doctrine.

smalkan, the act of teaching. (Construct, *smalkanka*.)

Continuous forms:

yang smalki katni, etc., I was teaching (as in English).

One of the most remarkable features of the Miskuto language, which occurs also in Sumu and Rama, is that the negative form of the verb is expressed by means of a special inflection. The

Miskuto for "not" is "*apya*"; but this word is used only in the future: *yang smalkamna apya*, generally shortened to *yang smalkamn' apya*. *A* and *i* are commonly interchangeable in these endings, according to euphony.

For all the other tenses, the termination *-ras* is used. This is, strictly speaking, an adjective, formed from the verbal noun *smalkra* with *s* privative, and thus means "without a teaching." So:

yang smalkras, or, *yang smalkras sni*—I do not teach; literally, "I am without a teaching."

yang smalkras katni—I did not teach.

yang smalkras kaina—I should not teach.

In each case the termination *-ras* is used with the parts of *kaia*, to be.

But this negative form in *-ras*, though originally an adjective, has come to be used as if it were a verb, and can take an object. Thus:

yang mai smalkras katni, I did not teach you.

The explanation of this may be that the objective case in Miskuto probably in its origin denoted direction, that is, the direction of an action; for even now, when clearness demands it, the direct object of nearly all verbs may (and of many must) be expressed by placing the post-position *ra* ("to") after the noun in question, thus:

waikna ba mairinra prukan, the man hit the woman.

waikna ba mairinra prukras, the man did not hit the woman.

Therefore the passive negative is expressed in the same way as the passive positive, that is, impersonally:

ai ikras, they do (did) not kill me: I am (was) not being killed.

ai smalkras, they do (did) not teach me: I am (was) not taught.

But here, as the form in *-ras* cannot be inflected for tense, this is expressed by the parts of the verb to be:

ai smalkras sa, I am not taught.

ai smalkras kata } *ai smalkras kan* } I was not taught.

ai smalkras kabia, I shall not be taught.

and also (see above) *ai smalkbia apya*, I shall not be taught.

The Verb ɻKAIA, kill, with Direct Object¹

	ME	THEE	HIM
I		<i>yang mai ikisni</i>	<i>yang witin (ba) ikisni</i>
Thou	<i>man ai ikisma</i>		<i>man witin (ba) ikisma</i>
He	<i>witin ai ikisa</i>	<i>witin mai ikisa</i>	
We (excl.)		<i>yang nani mai ikisni</i>	<i>yang nani witin (ba) ikisni</i>
We (incl.)		<i>yawon mai ikisa</i>	<i>yang witin (ba) ikisa</i>
You	<i>man nani ai ikisma</i>		<i>man nani witin (ba) ikisma</i>
They	<i>witin nani ai ikisa</i>	<i>witin nani mai ikisa</i>	<i>witin nani witin (ba) ikisa</i>
	US (excl.)	US (incl.)	YOU
I			<i>yang (man nani) mai ikisni</i>
Thou	<i>man (yang nani) man won ikisma</i>		
	<i>ai ikisma</i>		
He	<i>witin (yang nani) witin won ikisa</i>		<i>witin (man nani) mai ikisa</i>
	<i>ai ikisa</i>		
We (excl.)			<i>yang nani (man nani) mai ikisni</i>
			<i>yang (man nani) mai ikisa</i>
We (incl.)			
You	<i>man nani (yang nani) ai ikisma</i>	<i>man nani won ikisma</i>	
They	<i>witin nani (yang nani) ai ikisma</i>	<i>witin nani won ikisa</i>	<i>witin nani (man nani) mai ikisa</i>
	THEM		
I	<i>yang witin nani (ba) ikisni</i>		
Thou	<i>man witin nani (ba) ikisma</i>		
He	<i>witin witin nani (ba) ikisa</i>		
We (excl.)	<i>yang nani witin nani (ba) ikisni</i>		
We (incl.)	<i>yang witin nani (ba) ikisa</i>		
You	<i>man nani witin nani (ba) ikisma</i>		
They	<i>witin nani witin nani (ba) ikisa</i>		

SOME MISKUTO WORDS

<i>upla</i>	human being	<i>ūs̄i</i>	yam
<i>waikna</i>	man	<i>tāwa</i>	sweet potato; also, hair
<i>mairin</i>	woman	<i>yūlū</i>	mahogany
<i>tukta</i>	child	<i>yālam</i>	cedar
<i>aisa</i>	father	<i>auas</i>	pine (conifer)
<i>yapti</i>	mother	<i>p̄to</i>	pineapple (fruit)

¹ The forms in parentheses are inserted when otherwise there would be ambiguity. The subject need not be expressed. The nominative may always be inserted before the object for emphasis; cf. above, thou—me.

<i>lùpa</i>	offspring	<i>tasa</i>	rubber
<i>dàma</i>	grandfather	<i>kùkù</i>	cocoanut
<i>kuka</i>	grandmother	<i>dus</i>	tree, stick, wood
<i>mùla</i>	grandchild	<i>mà</i>	seed, fruit
<i>mòini</i>	brother of a male; sister of a female	<i>inma</i>	grass
<i>lòkra</i>	brother or sister of the opposite sex	<i>insla</i>	plantation
<i>wìna</i>	flesh	<i>unta</i>	hole; also, bush, forest
<i>wina lòra</i>	body	<i>pyahka</i>	swamp
<i>lal</i>	head	<i>laulu</i>	red mangrove
<i>nàkra</i>	eye	<i>àwala</i>	river
<i>kyàma</i>	ear	<i>kàbo</i>	sea
<i>kàkma</i>	nose	<i>auya</i>	sand; also, liver
<i>bìla</i>	mouth; also, word; opening	<i>tasba</i>	ground, land, country
<i>twìsa</i>	tongue	<i>lì</i>	water
<i>klàkla</i>	arm	<i>aikaia</i>	to give me
<i>mìta</i>	hand	<i>maikaia</i>	to give you
<i>mìta sirpi</i>	finger	<i>yaia</i>	to give to a third person
<i>kùpya</i>	heart	<i>smalkaia</i>	to teach
<i>byàra</i>	bowels	<i>aisaia</i>	to speak
<i>kuma</i>	leg	<i>wàia</i>	to say
<i>mina</i>	foot	<i>sunaia</i>	to draw up
<i>lìmì</i>	puma, jaguar	<i>prukaia</i>	to beat
<i>pyùta</i>	snake	<i>sipaia</i>	to sew
<i>kàrus</i>	alligator	<i>lùkaia</i>	to consider, to cross over
<i>inska</i>	fish	<i>bràia</i>	to have, to take
<i>raua</i>	parrot	<i>waia</i>	to go
<i>butku</i>	pigeon	<i>balaia</i>	to come
<i>sùla</i>	roe buck	<i>yauaia</i>	to swim
<i>tilba</i>	tapir	<i>sàkaia</i>	to bring out
<i>kyàki</i>	agouti	<i>takaia</i>	to come out
<i>ibina</i>	paca	<i>daukaia</i>	to make, to do
<i>wàri</i>	wild boar	<i>inaia</i>	to cry, roar
<i>bìp</i>	ox, cow	<i>langkaia</i>	to loosen
<i>àras</i>	horse	<i>langwaia</i>	to get loose
<i>palpa</i>	manatee	<i>tàra</i>	great
<i>ilili</i>	shark	<i>sirpi</i>	small
<i>twaina</i>	saw-fish	<i>yamni</i>	good
<i>kiski</i>	opossum	<i>saura</i>	bad
<i>kakamuk</i>	iguana	<i>yeri</i>	long
<i>ùsus</i>	john crow	<i>pràni</i>	short
<i>tairi</i>	mosquito	<i>pìni</i>	white
		<i>pauni</i>	red, bright and ruddy
		<i>sangni</i>	blue, clear
		<i>siksa</i>	black, dark

<i>āya</i>	corn	<i>karna</i>	strong
<i>siksa</i>	banana	<i>swapni</i>	weak
<i>plātō</i>	plantain	<i>mala</i>	sharp
<i>uita</i>	house	<i>damni</i>	sweet
<i>kwāla</i>	cloth	<i>ingni</i>	light (in every sense)
<i>yaura</i>	cassava	<i>ādā</i>	yes
<i>duswa</i>	tania, eddoe	<i>āpya</i>	no

SOME RULES OF MISKUTO SYNTAX

1. The adjective comes after its noun; except *baha* (that) and *naha* (this). The shortened forms *ba* and *na*, which serve as articles, follow the general rule, but are placed after other adjectives.
2. The sign of the plural, the word *nani*, comes after ordinary adjectives, but before the article.
3. Instead of prepositions, there are postpositions, some of which are enclitic, as *ra*, to, at. These follow the adjective or article.
4. Verbs, as a rule, come last in the sentence.

SOME EXAMPLES OF MISKUTO SENTENCES

Upla nani ban aisia, People say so.

Man Miskuto bila aisia? Do you speak Miskuto?

Witin a iwin, He told me.

Aras ba langks, Untie the horse.

Aras ba langwan, The horse has got loose.

Baha waikna pīni nani dras pauni ba brin, Those white men took the red horse.

Yang nani Prinsawala watni, We went to Prinsapolka.

Raua kumi baha mairin aisi kara yas, Give a parrot to the father of that woman.

Dus ba yang kai klapra prūkan, The tree struck my arm.

Ilili daiwan saura } The shark is a bad creature.

Yang man nani wol wamni, I will go with you (plural).

Twaina ba kārus lāmara yauisa, The saw-fish is swimming near the alligator.

Aiauya iūwan, His liver is lost: He has forgotten.

Aman kaikai, To see burnt: To take care.

Yang dairā wālisni, I hear my secret: I perceive.

Kāti aiskura alkan, The moon has caught his mother-in-law: The moon is eclipsed.

Kūpi krauisa, My heart is being bored: I remember.

Kūpi batwisa, My heart is bursting: I am angry.

Kūpya pīni, White heart: Kindness.

Kūpya siksa, Black heart: Stinginess.

Pùri sunisni, I draw up above me: I pray.
Wingka pùbaia, To blow breath: To rest.
Kùpya wlakaia, To turn the heart: To repent.

THE MISKUTO NUMERALS

Kumi, one. *wol*, two. *yumpa*, three. All others are expressed by circumlocutions.

Wolwol, two-two: four. *Matsip*, full hand: five.

Mailalkàbi, laying hand on head (*i. e.*, on head of thumb of other hand): six.

Mailalkàbi pura kumi, one above six: seven.

Mailalkabi pura wol, eight.

Mailalkàbi pura yumpa, nine.

Matawolsip, two full hands: ten.

Matawolsip pura kumi (*etc.*), eleven (*etc.*).

Matawolsip pura mailalkàbi pura kumi, one above six above ten: seventeen.

Yawonaiska, our all: hands and feet complete: twenty.

Yawonaiska kumi pura kumi, One above one score: twenty-one.

Yawonaiska wol, two score: forty.

Yawonaiska wolwol pura matawolsip pura mailalkàbi pura yumpa, ninety-nine.

Andat (*corruption for "hundred"*), *andat kumi*, one hundred.

BLUEFIELDS, NICARAGUA

NOTE

In the above paper Mr Heath should have mentioned H. Ziock, *Dictionary of the English and Miskito Languages*, Herrnhut, 1894 (Gustav Winter), and also H. Berckenhagen, *Grammar of the Miskito Language*, Bluefields, 1894 (printed by Gustav Winter, Stolpen, Saxony), both of which works contain valuable material.

I note in connection with the interchange between *ch* and *s* in Miskuto, a similar variation between Cuna (Darien) and San Blas (Panamá; cf. Prince, *Prolegomena to the Study of the San Blas Language of Panamá*, *American Anthropologist*, xiv, p. 113, 1912). So far as Mr Heath goes with reference to the composite character of the Miskuto, his conclusions are most interesting. I believe, however, that there are a few, possibly not many, similarities between the Miskuto and the Cuna-San Blas—cf. M. *li*, C. *ti* 'water'; M. *dama*, C. *pap-tumat* 'grandfather'; M. *aikaia*, SB. *ookei* 'give' (?). These analogies might be multiplied by a closer examination and seem only to illustrate still more satisfactorily the mongrel nature of the present Miskuto idiom.

—J. DYNELEY PRINCE.